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Briefly, Mr. Gould's theory comes to this: he believes that of all panaceas for the evils in a modern State moral instruction is the best. Like the leaders of the Salvation Army, who saw no reason why the devil should have all the best tunes, he sees no reason why the non-moral literary people should have all the best stories: he, therefore, takes them from every conceivable source and adapts them to the purpose in hand. He frankly discusses with his class the behavior of the hero, uses all his skill in illustrations, questioning, etc., to make the children get his point, and leaves the actual moral unmentioned. On which omission we congratulate him. What kind of moral training is the result of Mr. Gould's method it is hard to say, unless we have records of the life histories of the children thus taught. But personal knowledge of children suggests that in early years morality comes not by way of precept, but by way of good habits acquired in a good environment; a child must be made courageous, for courage is the root of most virtue, and in his adolescence he will ponder on it. Of course, he will delight in all stories, since he is hungry for experience, of which narrative is a fruitful source. Undoubtedly, he must have stories; undoubtedly, he must discuss them, if the spirit moves him; for all this will be grist for his mill when he begins to make æsthetic and moral theory for himself. But he will probably, in spite of the humane and excellent teaching of Mr. Gould, spend his early years as an a-moral creature with, let us hope, good habits.

NANCY CATTY.

London, England.

THE EVOLUTION OF STATES: AN INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH POLITICS. By J. H. Robertson. London: Watts & Co., 1912. Pp. ix, 486.

Too often, when reading history, one has a sense of moving in a world of mythology. Vague principles, embodied sometimes in the shape of races, sometimes in the persons of princes and eminent men, contend with one another and raise states to greatness or sweep them into decadence. Mr. Robertson's book is an attempt to give substance to this battle of shadows, by bringing to light "the ruling forces in all political life, ancient and modern alike." His ideal is to make history completely rational,

to show that all events can be explained in terms of natural causation. This is, of course, not a new ideal: Mr. Robertson is only following his master Buckle, whose attempt to trace the destinies of nations to the operation of physical and economic causes was epoch-making in spite of its defects. But, while bringing out the importance of the economic factors in political development, Mr. Robertson differs from most writers of this school in the place he assigns to purely ethical factors, and it is the interest of his ethical views which induces me to draw the attention of readers of this JOURNAL to his book.

Assuming that all energy divides into forces of attraction and repulsion, he aims at showing how political progress consists in the gradual purification of these forces which, in early stages of civilization, consist almost entirely of animal passions fortified by irrational beliefs. Civilization advances in proportion as the animal passions become ineffective and false beliefs are replaced by knowledge as to what causes produce what effects. If in the past people had not thought certain things desirable,—*e. g.*, the suppression of those who differed in religion, the acquisition of slaves, the annexation and conquest of neighbors, or, within a community, the subjection of one class to another,—civilization would have made much more rapid progress than it has done. With the growth of the scientific spirit, the pernicious consequences of such actions are more generally understood, and, as men obey reason more and more, politics becomes a constructive art, and the world goes on indefinitely improving, the conflicting forces being diverted from war and oppression to the production of literature, art and virtue. Thus, for Mr. Robertson, history, once rationalized, becomes useful by teaching a definite lesson. He discusses, first, the evolution, both political and economic, of Rome and the Greek states. After summing up the causes of the decay of ancient civilization, he examines the case of the Italian republics, and then passes to the minor European states,—Scandinavia, the Hansa, Holland, Switzerland and Portugal,—and concludes with a section on English history up to the reign of Anne. Everywhere he finds the same writing on the wall: States have flourished or decayed solely according as they were sound or unsound economically and ethically.

This thesis is worked out with immense industry and learning. Mr. Robertson, who is Parliamentary Secretary to the

Board of Trade, is an active politician, and while we wonder how he can find time for so much writing (he has more than thirty books to his credit, many of them on literary and religious subjects), we feel that the present book might have been improved by condensation and a keener sense of proportion. As it is, it is indigestible, though brilliant in parts, especially on the negative side. Whenever he has to expose the irrationality of the various beliefs that have retarded progress, it is a joy to watch him dealing havoc among cherished prejudices. Many of these beliefs are the common stock-in-trade of historians,—for instance, the myth about racial characteristics, which he tracks in all its ramifications of absurdity through the pages of the most respected writers. We are all of us ridden by the notion that different races have different innate aptitudes,—Romans and English for Empire, Semites for being inartistic and overreaching, Orientals for stagnation, Teutons for morality, Celts for political ineptitude, English for parliamentary government, and so on. Mr. Robertson urges with force that this is all imagination; what nations have done or failed to do is an affair not of natural aptitude, but of conditions. And not to see this is to clog the wheels of progress, since these delusions are bound up with such reactionary forces as race-pride, hatred of the foreigner, and the ‘vertigo of the higher dunghill.’

On the positive side Mr. Robertson is less convincing. Although now and then in history the voice of reason has undoubtedly been followed with excellent results, may not this be merely an abnormal accident? He seems to assume that the growth of the scientific spirit means that the empire of reason as a directing force not only is more potent now than it has been in the past, but that it probably will increase. But growth of knowledge does not necessarily involve growth of tendency towards right action; it might be argued that states never have acted wisely unless it happened to be in the interest, real or fancied, of the dominant classes to do so, and that, in this world of mixed passions, rational persuasion, however generally recognized as rational, must always be impotent unless it happens to coincide with the desires of the strong. Armaments are a case in point; the almost universal recognition of them as irrational seems to bring their abolition no nearer. There seems, again, to be some vagueness in Mr. Robertson’s conception of the relation between economics and ethics. He often implies, as for instance in his

excellent analysis of the "vast economic simulacrum" that the Roman Empire was, that ethical soundness and economic soundness are identical, or at any rate that they imply one another. I see no necessity for this. It seems possible that a state which was ethically a hell should be perfectly sound economically.

London, England.

SYDNEY WATERLOW.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLISH LIBERALISM. By W. Lyon Blease.
London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1913. Pp. 374.

At a time when the party system is falling into not undeserved discredit, it is well to be reminded that such labels as 'Liberal' and 'Conservative' did originally stand for a genuine set of principles. Such recent works as those of Professor Hobhouse and Lord Hugh Cecil have done something to remind us of this, and the present book is quite worthy to take its place along with them. Mr. Blease, who is a prominent Suffragist and was formerly on the staff of the *Manchester Guardian*, traces the history of Liberalism in British politics during the last hundred and fifty years. Writing as a strong Liberal, he will naturally appear to his opponents to be biased and partial; but he is far fairer to his opponents than the average politician, and, appealing as he always does to fundamental principles, his book has a philosophical value which raises it above the ordinary party manifesto. He starts by defining the essential nature of Liberalism, and in doing so insists that its opposite is not Conservatism, but Toryism. The history of the last ten years would seem to justify him. In the fiscal question Toryism has been the active and changing force, and the true Conservative has allied himself with the Liberals. That which Liberalism combats is not the desire to preserve existing institutions, but rather the habit of mind which refuses to regard individuals as ends in themselves and as entitled to perfect liberty of self-expression. Mr. Blease puts it rather too strongly when he says: "The Liberal says, 'The State is made for man, and not man for the State.' The Tory reverses the dogma, and even when he pursues the good of individuals, he pursues it rather in order to make them better soldiers or workers, that is to say, better servants of the State, than to make them better in themselves." This statement needs a good deal of modification. The Liberal cannot, any more than the Tory, regard man in isolation from the